e Poultry Yard

English Hens Visit America to Take Part in an Egg-Laying Contest.

In the current issue of Farm and Fireside appears a resort of an egg-laying contest recently terminated in this country. One of the most interesting passages in this report follows:

"The really sensational feature of the contest, thus far, is the wonderful record made by the pen of S. C. White Leghorns entered in the contest by an English poultryman. This pen, during the six months, laid 1,234 eggs, which is 153 eggs more than the next best pen laid, and an average of 47,8 eggs a hen more than the average production a hen, of all the hens in the contest.

"The question naturally arises, 'Why has this English pen so far outdistanced our American pens?' There must be a reason. When 10 birds after traveling on ocean and land for two weeks, much of the time without feed or water, can start right in and make a record of this kind, there must be something more than 'luck' behind it.

"The owner of this pen states that every one of the 10 pullets in the pen was bred from a female with a high record for egg production, and sired by a male out of a high-producing hen. Therein seems to lie the secret of the wonderful record which this pen is making.

"There can be no doubt but that the average American poultry-breeder, during the past few years has been paying so much attention to the color of feathers and show records that he has lost sight of the more important matter of egg production. One thing is certain, promiscuous and careless breeding will never enable the poultrymen of this country to make any progress in egg production. Careful breeding and selection must be practised if progress is to be made."

Sorehead.

From now until the first of November is the time that we will be troubled with the dread disease, sorehead, one thing that possibly discourages more people in the south from raising chickens and when it appears gives one about as much trouble as anything I know of. It can so easily be prevented if precautions are used. Of all the things the United States government should take up and thoroughly go to the bottom of it is this dreaded sorehead. It is just as important for the poultry industry as tick eradication or hog cholera preventive is worth to the live stock industry. There could, I believe, some method be had by which this disease could be prevented by inoculation, and eventually I believe it will be done. It is given up by most authorities that the cause of sorehed is the thicking of the bleed during changeable weather in early fall or late summer and is a blood disease similar to measles or smallpox. We know that when a chicken once has it they never have it again, and it breaks out similar to smallpox.

The best and surest way to prevent this trouble is to begin in June and give on Tuesday of each week one tablespoonful of Epsom salts to every ten to fifteen chickens (frying size). This should be dissolved in warm water and mixed in soft feed to be sure that the chickens get it. They do not like to drink water with salts in it or eat dry feed with it in it. Therefore they should be hungry and it should be fed in wet mash. On Friday of each week the same amount of sulphur should be given in soft feed, but during wet weather or damp speels the sulphur should be omitted and the salts substituted. A person should use judgment in this respect and if too much salts is given to physic the chickens too freely it should be reduced, the main object being to keep the blood purified and thoroughly cleansed from June until November. Through this method the system is kept pure and impurities will pass out with the excretion, and unless this is done the chickens will have high fever and if they did not break out in sores over the head the fever would kill them. If it should happen to appear in your flock you should get to work immediately and physic them every other day until their blood is purified. Get one pint of raw linseed oil and add to it one ounce of pure carbolic acid, start with the well chickens and bathe the heads of every chicken, the well ones and those that have the disease. If this is done in time usually two applications will cure it, but it is far better to avoid it rather than have to doctor every chicken.

Sorehead almost always leaves the hen with a cold, which will go into roup unless checked in time. By using permanganate of potash in the drinking water, or Conkey's Roup Cure or any of the other permisides that can be had conveniently it will prevent the spreading of the disease in your flock of fowls. Diseases of all kinds are usually carried through the drinking water more easily than in any other way. Therefore it should be kept pure. When a sick chicken drinks out of a vessel, more or less of of the water falls in the vessel, and it will become contaminated. This is why it is a good idea to use antiseptics in the drinking water when any diseaes appears appears and they should be fed better than ever plenty sound, wholesome grain as it will help strengthen the system more than soft feed or any other kind. Good feeding and sufficient nourishment will do more to throw off disease and help cure sick chickens than all the medicine that can be given. If this treatment is carried out you will not likely have much trouble with sorehead, and it should not be neglected but thoroughly looked after every season. The loss from this one cause runs into thousands of dollars all over the south, and could be avoided if these precautions are used.—Loring Brown in Atlanta Journal.

Time to Market Old Hens.

Experience has told us that hens, after they have passed their third season of laying are not nearly so profitable to keep as are pullets and younger hens. After the second season of laying the decrease is slight for the third, but during the next period they fall off a whole lot, and it is this time of slack work which we want to anticipate and provoke against. As a rule, if the pullets are early hatched, that is, in February and March, they will, during the following fall, winter and spring, lay more eggs than they will during any succeeding period of their lives. Consequently pay better for their keep, but it will not pay to dispose of them after just one period of usefulness of this kind, for the decrease for the second year will as a rule be so slight that they will be a paying proposition all right.

The third season they begin to be too fat and as a result sluggish in all their movements, laying along with the rest. It is this time that the strictly up-to-date poultryman who is looking after the little leaks in the business with a keen eye gets rid of the hens of this class unless there be one, by observation, that is proving that she is thoroughly able to pay her way and leave a good profit besides.

It is a good time from now on until September to market this class of hens Some of them may have been doing duty as setters and mothers.

In that case they may set in and lay a nice batch of eggs, in which case by all means let them alone as long as they are hitting it up in that shape, but just as soon as they stop and show signs of going into moult get ready to put them on the market. Lose no time at it, either, for every day is just so much feed lost. You see the chances are that they will bo into a long-drawn out moult lasting away into the fall and no eggs will be forthcoming before late in the following spring, and then but irregular laying is the general rule for such a class of hens. That means a lot of valuable feed thrown away with but slight returns from the egg crop. As to keeping them for the holiday trade, as some have done, will say that that will not as a rule pay half so well as to get them right off as soon as their day of usefulness as indicated has passed. Because our fathers and grandfathers had the habit of letting these old hens loaf around as long as they had the strength to drag about is no reason for our doing so unprofitable a thing. It may take a little effort and watchfulness on our part to tell which the hens are that are old enough to be in that class. If we have but a small flock it is usually not a very hard task to remember the old ones by some peculiarity about them, but where we have a large flock the proper thing to do is to prepare for this very time when these hens are hatched by marking them in the foot with a punch. A certain mark for one year and another foot mark for another foot mark for another year. In that way you can get at them to a certainty. Good chickens are usually scarce at this season for the reason that people usually dispose of all the surplus stock that they think they are not going to need earlier in the spring.

Then, too, these old hens are usually in their very prime as to flesh, nature having given them a good plump body for the duties of egg production and the hatching and rearing period. It will pay to dres sthem as a rule and with care put them upon the market in splendid shape. In that way they will not show their age nearly so much as they do on foot with perhaps rough shanks, etc. At any rate attend to this work of getting them upon the market at the opportune time, saving yourself a lot of expensive feed. Market a few of them at a time as they quit laying and begin to moult.Southern Agriculturist.

How to Handle Guineas.

Guinea fowl came originally from Africa, where they are more or less wild, and even in this country they still show much of their original disposition. They are much given to rambling away, especially in woods, roosting of preference on tall trees.

They go in pairs, one male to one female. As they almost always seek secluded places for their nests, much care is required in keeping track of them, if it is desired to save their eggs. If the flock contains more hens than cocks, the unmated hens likely to lay in the nests of one that is mated, hence a good share of the eggs are unfertilized.

It requires 30 days to hatch guineas and they can be handled very much the same as common chicks, except that being very sensitive to cold, setting should be delayed until warm weather if possible.

If the hen is kept in a coop in a run containing trees or bushes with thick tall grass, they will do well, especially if the ground will afford them a good supply of insect food.

The cocks can be distinguished from the hens by the wider, deeper-colored wattles, and more compact build. The hen's wattles are longer and it is the hen only that use sthe call, "pot-rack! pot-rack!"

Farmers all know that guineas are very wary and never fail to give the alarm if hawks come near. Many keep guineas for that reason.

Of late years the increasing scarcity of wild game on the public markets has led to the substitution of guineas for pheasants. Their full rounded breasts and dark, juicy flesh, make them good substitutes, and the demand for them is increasing.

They should be fed mixed whole grains, morning and night, and if in confined runs must have ample water, grit and shade.—F. J. R. in Progressive Farmer.

Wuff!

"Is there safety in numbers?" asked the Boob

"Not if you are speeding and a cop sees your license tag," replied the Wise Guy.

Haste and Thoroughness.

Many will regret that the old Corner Clock has seen its day. We retain a fond and lingering memory of its conspicuous place in our grandparents' home. When in its presence, we were fully conscious that with each stroke of its pendelum it was measuring time as faithfully and accurately as if it had been a living thing. As months passed by, it would not be one whit behind the season of the year. It won and held our entire confidence. So slowly and persistently did it perform its service that, as we went into the library, it would greet us with its soothing message, giving the supreme assuranceance that there was "Plenty of time! Plenty of time!" It seems to instill a spirit of confidence and contentment that made life worth while. We found time for business, for home pleasure, for social pastime, for the enjoyment of real life. Somehow we had time to attend to things—and to attend to them rightly—for we worked to the tune of the old Corner Clock.

But today we have a small clock on the mantel that jerks and sputters all day long; a little brass concern that persistently urges us to "Get there! Get theer! Get there!" We catch its impulsive sentiment; the blood tingles through our veins, nerves reach high tension, minds are set awhirl and we unconsciously keep time with its jerking suggestion. We rush and fuss all day long until we are half crazed; and even our slumber is often interrupted by its insistent "Get there! Get there!" In such state of mind and body, we are apt to slight the details of life's mission and work, blunder over small things, shun matters that seem to be insignificant. We live too fast. The "short cut" idea prevails. Duties, privileges, responsibilities, unconsciously escape notice. Real purpose and service in life fade away under the stress and strain of hurry and bustle. We become over burden. What our hands had to do is not done rightly, for we do all things either in too much haste, or completely unto ourselves, and not as "unto one of these my children." All this because we want to carry out the suggestion of fussy little clock that tells us to "get there! get there!" Let us turn over a new leaf and learn to value time by living with more deliberation, by measuring systematized service with the length of the passing hour and keeping at our work—slowly, steadily, persistently, learning thoroughness, and so to labor that the little things of life and the details of service are neither overlooked nor shunned, but recognized as stepping-stones to greater things.—Christian Herald.

LONE SCHOONER FOUND SAILING OFF FLORIDA COAST

Only Live Thing Discovered on Board Deserted Vessel Was a Chicken.

Tampa, Fla., Aug. 21.—The oil steamer Standard today towed into this port the sponging schooner Mobile and reported that the Mobile was found Saturday 100 miles west of Tampa, with nothing alive on board but a chicken. Seven weeks ago John Cothris, owner of the boat, left Tampa for a trip to the sponging grounds. The usual crew was five persons, but is not known how many were on this trip. The vessel was sailing, all sails set, when picked up by the Standard.

Youth and Old Age.

In a memorable passage in a memorable book Samuel Butler says: "Autumn in the mellower season, and what we lose in flowers we more than gain in fruits." Fontelle, at the age of 99, being asked what was the happiest time in his life, said he did not know that he had ever been much happier than he then was, but that, perhaps his best years had been those when he was between 55 and 75, and Dr. Johnson placed the pleasures of old age far higher than those of youth.

The comparative pleasure of old age and youth has always been a favorite theme of debate, and there have been few men who have lived wisely who have not echoed the opinion of Fontenelle and Johnson. But the joys of age are not those of youth.

To travel joyfully down the sunset slope you must have acquired in youth tastes and interests which do not disappear as bodily vigor wanes. Excessive devotion to the so-called practical activities of life or to bodily pleasures in its various terms, leads almost inevitably to a tedious and embittered senility.

County up the happy old men and women of your acquaintance and you will find that they are the ones who have laid up a rich store of intellectual wealth. The proper pleasures of life's autumn are those of the intellect, and if you have been too busy or too lazy to acquire the taste for such pleasures you can expect your declining years to be at best merely a vacant, joyless waiting for the end. —Milwaukee Journal.